

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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R 291200Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8038

INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMCONSUL SA PAULO

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, BR, CI

SUBJECT: BRAZILIAN ARMY MINISTER VISITS CHILE

1. SUMMARY: ARMY MINISTER FROTA PAID AN APPARENTLY CORDIAL VISIT TO CHILE DURING WHICH HE MET PRIVATELY WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET. PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM BOTH SIDES DURING THE VISIT EMPHASIZED THE HISTORIC FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHILE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SOLIDARITY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE CHILEANS ALSO PRAISED THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENTS SINCE THE 1964 REVOLUTION AND STRESSED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE EXCELLENT. UPON RETURNING, FROTA EXPRESSED ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE TRIP AND THE CHILEAN AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRIP. END SUMMARY.

2. BRAZILIAN ARMY MINISTER GENERAL SYLVIO FROTA PAID AN OFFICIAL FIVE-DAY VISIT TO CHILE ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 166TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHILEAN INDEPENDENCE. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, THE VIST WAS MARKED BY EFFUSIVE

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STATEMENTS FROM BOTH SIDES, AND IT IS APPARENT THAT FROTA

WAS WELL RECEIVED BY HIS CHILEAN HOSTS.

3. AT AN IMPROMPTU PRESS CONFERENCE WHEN HE ARRIVED IN SANTIAGO ON SEPTEMBER 17, FROTA DESCRIBED CHILE AS A "COUNTRY WITH WHICH BRAZIL MAINTAINS BONDS OF THE DEEPEST FRIENDSHIP." AT A CEREMONY THAT NIGHT CHILEAN ARMY MINISTER GENERAL HERMAN BRADY RECALLED THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHILE AND DEVOTED PARTICULAR PRAISE TO WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT OF BRAZIL WHICH, HE SAID, WAS: "RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ELEVATION OF THE COUNTRY TO THE LEVEL OF THE GREAT INDUSTRIAL POWERS AND HAS BEEN SHOWING DURING THESE TWELVE YEARS HOW A COUNTRY SHOULD BE GOVERNED." ON ANOTHER OCCASION BRADY SAID: "THE ARMED FORCES OF BRAZIL AND CHILE FIND THEMSELVES EVER MORE UNIFIED TO CONSTRUCT A FREE, SOVEREIGN, GREAT AND PURE AMERICA."

4. DURING THE VISIT FROTA WAS DECORATED WITH THE ORDER OF O'HIGGINS AND, ACCORDING TO A PRESS REPORT, COULD BARELY CONCEAL HIS EMOTION AS HE SPOKE OF BRAZIL'S ADMIRATION FOR THE CHILEAN PEOPLE. FROTA SAID THAT THE PEOPLE OF BOTH COUNTRIES ARE DEFENDING THE VALUES OF CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION AND THAT THE SPIRIT OF FRATERNITY BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS MUST BE KEPT ALIVE.

5. IN ADDITION TO THE GRAND CROSS OF THE ORDER OF O'HIGGINS FOR FROTA, THE CHILEANS HAD LESSER MEDALS FOR THE BRAZILIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL AND THREE ARMY OFFICERS WHO ACCOMPANIED THE ARMY MINISTER. FROTA IN TURN DECORATED CHILEAN PRESIDENT AUGUSTO PINOCHET AND SIX CHILEAN OFFICERS WITH VARIOUS CLASSES OF THE ORDER OF MILITARY MERIT, AND ARMY MINISTER BRADY WAS GIVEN THE ORDER OF RIO BRANCO (HE ALREADY HAD MILITARY MERIT.) FROTA ALSO GAVE PINOCHET AN FAL RIFLE AS A PRESENT FROM PRESIDENT GEISEL AND A PISTOL AS A PRESENT FROM HIMSELF. BRADY GOT A PISTOL FROM FROTA ALONG WITH THE LATTER'S WISHES THAT BRADY WOULD NOT HAVE TO USE IT.

6. BRADY TOLD BRAZILIAN JOURNALISTS THAT POLITICO-MILITARY RELATIONS BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHILE WERE "EXCELLENT."
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HE ALSO SAID THAT THE LATIN AMERICAN MILITARY REPRESENTATIVES AT THE INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS WERE THERE STRICTLY FOR SOCIAL REASONS AND SO THAT THEY COULD GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER. BRADY DENIED THAT ANY MILITARY CONFERENCE HAD BEEN HELD. TO JUDGE FROM BRAZILIAN PRESS REPORTS ALL OF SPANISH SPEAKING SOUTH AMERICA SENT DELEGATIONS TO THE INDEPENDENCE DAY CEREMONIES EXCEPT THE TWO DEMOCRACIES, COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA. PANAMA AND SPAIN

WERE ALSO REPORTED AS SENDING DELEGATIONS.

7. FROTA MET TWICE PRIVATELY WITH PRESIDENT PINOCHET, WHO AT ONE POINT TOLD A BRAZILIAN JOURNALIST: "RELATIONS BETWEEN BRAZIL AND CHILE ARE THE FRIENDLIEST, STRONGEST AND MOST CORDIAL POSSIBLE."

8. ON HIS RETURN FROTA APPEARED ENTHUSIASTIC AND SAID HE HAD A WONDERFUL TIME IN CHILE. FROTA IS A CAVALRY OFFICER AND APPARENTLY THE HIGH POINT OF HIS TRIP WAS A VISIT TO THE CHILEAN ARMY CAVALRY SCHOOL AT QUILLOTA. CHILEAN AMBASSADOR GENERAL HECTOR BRAVO MUNOZ WELCOMED FROTA AT THE AIRPORT IN BRASILIA AND TOLD JOURNALISTS THAT THE VISIT OF THE ARMY MINISTER WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR RELATIONS BETWEEN CHILE AND BRAZIL.

9. COMMENT: BRAZIL HAS HISTORICALLY HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILE, ONE OF THE TWO SOUTH AMERICAN COUNTRIES THAT BRAZIL DOES NOT BORDERON. THE FROTA VISIT IS ONE OF A CONTINUING SERIES OF MILITARY VISITS BACK AND FORTH. THE VISITS ARE PRESUMABLY PUSHED BY CHILE, WHICH DOES NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO BE ISOLATED IN THE WORLD OR HEMISPHERIC COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE BORDER PROBLEM IT HAS WITH PERU. THE VISIT RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PRESS ATTENTION, BUT A MARKED LACK OF EDITORIAL COMMENT. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED BY AT LEAST ONE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE HERE THAT BRAZIL, FOR NOW, PREFERS TO LIMIT HIGH LEVEL EXCHANGES WITH CHILE TO MILITARY CHANNELS AND POLITELY SIDESTEP CHILEAN OVERTURES FOR AN EXCHANGE OF PRESIDENTIAL VISITS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS, VISITS, INDEPENDENCE CELEBRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BRASIL08350
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760368-0204
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976099/aaaaahgs.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <25 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BRAZILIAN ARMY MINISTER VISITS CHILE
TAGS: PFOR, MPOL, BR, CI, (FROTA, SYLVIO), (BRADY, HERMAN), (PINOCHETUGARTE, AUGUSTO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006